

SYN. NO. _____

AGN. NO. _____

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR ZEV YAROSLAVSKY

June 19, 2007

Refugees leave their countries of citizenship due to political, religious, or other pressing issues that have the potential to result in bodily harm, degradation, or even death. The decision to leave is never made lightly and often time involves unimaginable risks and perils unheard of in free societies such as ours.

It takes courage to leave one's country to start life anew somewhere far beyond one's borders. You tear the roots you've spent generations planting and, under terrible circumstances, abandon your culture, your customs, and your family.

Refugees and their families settle in Los Angeles County with the objective of starting new lives free of persecution, torture, and imprisonment. Los Angeles County's Department of Public Social Services and local refugee agencies play an integral part in assisting the refugee in this life-changing endeavor.

Culturally and linguistically sensitive employment and specialized services are provided daily to refugees and their families to assist them in integrating into American society and enhancing their daily lives within the County. These services are provided by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) staffs who are here today, along with the County's contracted refugee agencies, Jewish Vocational Services (JVS), Armenian Evangelical Social Services Center, Armenian Relief Society,

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Catholic Charities of Los Angeles, and Community Enhancement Services.

This partnership contributes significantly toward empowering refugees to overcoming barriers and achieving their goals and dreams.

As residents of Los Angeles County, through their talents, faiths, and shared common values, refugees enrich and enhance our society and add the diversity which strengthens the fabric of life in Los Angeles County. For the past decades, many refugees seeking freedom, safety and liberty, have chosen to resettle in Los Angeles County. Just as The United Nations and The Governor of California have proclaimed June 2007 as “World Refugee Awareness Month” and “Refugee Awareness Month”, respectively, The Board of Supervisors of Los Angeles County recognizes the numerous contributions refugees have made to enrich the culture of Los Angeles County.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors hereby proclaim June 2007 as “Refugee Awareness Month” throughout the County of Los Angeles to increase the awareness of the strength and contributions of refugees to our County.